



FAN

Family Access Network Autumn Newsletter 2021 - Volume 113

CEO UPDATE

Welcome to the FAN Autumn Newsletter. Sue Carlile the CEO who usually writes the editorial for the newsletter has just returned from her well-deserved annual leave and long service leave this week, so this newsletter sees you getting the report from me whilst Sue settles back in. For those who haven't met me I am Michelle Thompson, and I am the Manager of the Client Services Team at FAN.

At the end of 2020 FAN underwent Accreditation where we achieved all requirements to satisfy meeting the following standards:

- Rainbow Tick 2nd Edition
- Human Service Standards (HSS)
- QIC Health and Community Services Standards

The outcome for Rainbow Tick was a particular highlight for FAN as we received 13 exceeded practices for our work with young LGBTIQ people. The LGBTIQ portfolio members took on a lead role in preparing documents and have done a tremendous job with show casing the work we do. Congratulations to everyone involved including the CEO, the staff, volunteers, the young people and the Board on this successful outcome.

The assessors made the below comment regarding the Rainbow Tick which highlights the amazing work from the team:

“Feedback from clients and stakeholders showed a high regard for the staff and their inclusive practices, a client centred approach aimed at empowering clients to overcome challenges and become more resilient”

The below comment made by assessors was about the organisation as a whole which highlights our strengths:

“The strengths of the organisation include:

- Strong values
- Inclusive practice
- Advocacy at the local, state level for marginalized and vulnerable young people
- Flexibility of staff
- Engaged board, values driven leadership
- Collaborative
- Clients feel valued, respected, and able to contribute
- Staff culture of sharing, compassion for people, support”

We are very proud to have done so well and achieved meeting all the Standards.

Within the newsletter there is an introduction from Vanita Harris and Michael Woollard two new staff members at FAN. We welcome them both and they have been amazing additions to the team. As we head into a COVID normal for Victoria our groups and client work face to face are being resumed at FAN. Whilst using platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams has been very useful over this time we have missed the face to face contact with all our clients and other stakeholders. So as the year progresses, we hope to see you all in person very soon.

Regards

Michelle Thompson

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Board update

Welcome to the first FAN newsletter for 2021. As I write this, we have just come out of the third Victorian COVID 19 lockdown although there are still a number of restrictions on gatherings and the requirement to wear masks more broadly.

Last year, 2020, was severely impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic impacting all countries across the world. While Australia has been less impacted by the virus than some other countries, many individuals and organisations have felt the impact of lost income, lockdowns and a decline in business.

FAN, as an essential service, has continued to provide assistance to our clients during the pandemic. Although face to face meetings and groups with clients have not been possible, staff and clients have adapted to participating in their support services via telephone, zoom meetings and other online group services.

The end of 2020 marked 12 months since FAN relocated to the new office location in Box Hill and the new office layout has facilitated staff being able to remain Covid safe while at work. FAN staff have been incredibly resilient in their approach to continuing to deliver outstanding services to clients of FAN.

All of the services provided by FAN, including Peer Leadership, young mum's groups, the Eastern Diversity group, Homeless Youth Dual Diagnosis group, Private Rental Brokerage and the Family Violence Therapeutic Intervention – Pathways to Resilience programs have continued to assist clients.

The latest report to the Board indicated that some of the impacts of the pandemic on our clients is the increase of reports of family violence and an increase in mental health issues being felt by our clients. As such support had adapted to service delivery offering online support, games, mindfulness programs and when allowed, picnics in the park.

I would also like to welcome Michael Woollard, Financial Administrator, to FAN. Michael has been busy addressing many of the financial systems within FAN, moving to electronic payments and providing reports to the CEO and Board.

We all look forward to moving to a more normal service delivery as we progress into 2021.

Di Godfrey - Chair

Homeless Support Services

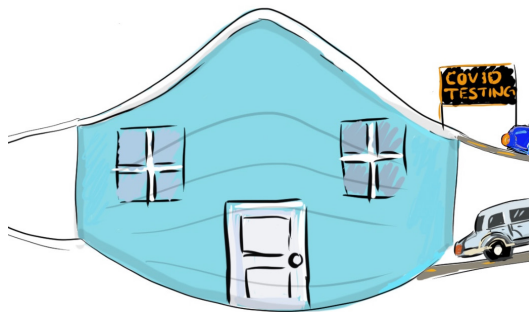
After a very interesting 2020, we have welcomed a COVIDsafe start to 2021. During 2020, the way FAN operated was very different to what we are used to. As we push forward, things will start to look a little different again.

If you are visiting the office, we will ask that you bring a mask and wear it when inside. If you don't have one, we can provide you with a disposable mask. There is also hand sanitiser throughout the office for you to use.

For those attending groups, masks again will be required if the activities are indoors. The group facilitator will bring disposables if you forget. Cleaning practices will also be ramped up. The group facilitator will bring antibacterial spray and cloths to wipe down the common touch areas.

Other ways you can remain COVIDsafe is:

- washing your hands regularly
- keeping 1.5m distance from others
- wearing a mask when you can't socially distance
- keep track of where you go just in case it becomes an exposure site
- get tested if you have symptoms



FAN's New Staff!

Michael Woollard

A CPA qualified accountant with many years finance and accounting experience in for profit and not for profit organisations. Previous role was Finance Manager at Eastern Community Legal Centre.



Vanita Harris

Hi, my name is Vanita! I was hired as new staff member in October 2020, as a Homelessness Emergency Response Worker. I have a passion for helping young people which has led me to this position. Back in 2019 I finished a cert IV in Community Services and went on to finish my Diploma in Youth Work last year. I was provided with this opportunity by my teacher and this is my first role in the sector, I hope to further my skills, knowledge and experience while studying my Bachelors in the next few years. I have volunteered in homelessness groups and youth groups and am eager to do more! I am extremely excited to learn as much as I can from Family Access Network and believe that what they do and who they support is admirable. I am looking forward to the next few months I am here!



Creating Connections - Private Rental Brokerage Program

Throughout the last year it has never been more crucial for young people to have stable and affordable accommodation. Having this enables young people to fully participate in community and empowers them to partake in school, employment and enhance their overall wellbeing. This is recognised through the integral core values of Family Access Network and the Private Rental Brokerage Program.

The program aims to support young people in gaining the skills and knowledge they need to successfully access and sustain private rental housing as well as providing brokage to go towards startup cost associated with private rental housing. If you would like to refer a young person to the program or have any inquiries, please call FAN on 9890 2673 and speak to one of our Youth Support Workers.

Children's Program

The Children's Program - Early Years provides timely support to young pregnant /parenting families and their accompanying children, providing them with appropriate services and therapeutic interventions. The Children's Program -Early Years provides the framework to ensure FAN's physical space, resources, work practice and policies are consistent with and operating at best practice to support a child safe environment.

The Children and Young Families Support Worker is committed to providing a range of early interventions for children and to act as a resource for parent's, staff and volunteers by conducting educational workshops and information sessions on current underlying issues regarding children.

For information on the current or future programs please contact FAN on 9890 2673

Pathways to Resilience - LGBTIQ + Family Violence Therapeutic Support Group

FAN is running a new group for LGBTIQ+ young people (ages 15-25) who have experienced family violence.

The group meets weekly on Monday afternoons during school terms. Group will be facilitated face-to-face at the FAN office in Box Hill. Topics include self-care, character strengths, mindfulness, healthy relationships, helpful people, and positive emotions.

For more information or to join the group, please contact the group worker, Miles Milton, on 9890 2673 or mmilton@fan.org.au.

Life Skills

Eastern Diversity Group

EDG is a social support group for young people aged 15-25 years who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community. EDG finished the year by having a picnic in the park and enjoyed finally being able to be back to in person!

The group finished the year with activities such as Origami, painting, employment workshops and knitting. All these activities were able to be facilitated online with materials being sent directly to young people's homes.

Coming up this year we look forward to being back to in person and will start the year with another picnic in the park to enjoy the lovely weather. Other activities include an Escape Room, a first aid course and a visit to Chesterfield farm! The group will also participate in fortnightly online games to slowly transition back to normal.

We will be meeting every Thursday from 3:30pm to 5pm. Give us a call on 9890 2673 or send an email to mmilton@fan.org.au if you're interested in joining the group, we always welcome new faces!

Young Mum's Group

The Young Mum's Group is off to a great start for 2021. We are extremely excited to welcome everyone back to group in person! So far this term we have been attending swimming lessons at Aqualink. The mums and kids are shown how to enter and exit a pool safely as well as how to become familiar breathing under water!

The remainder of term 1 will be held at Burgess Family Centre, Box Hill on Wednesday's at 12-2pm. If you are interested in joining or would like more information you can contact Maddie on 9890 2673 or msill@fan.org.au

Peer Leadership Program

Great news! FAN will be continuing the Peer Leadership Program in 2021. Last year 3 FAN graduates successfully completed the program.

One graduate said the program increased their confidence in their ability to learn. This year, the young person has decided to commence their studies in Community Services. Another graduate will take a supporting role in contributing to the planning of EDG's activities.

The Peer Leadership Program is open for young people who have graduated through either FAN's HSS Program, PRPB program or Life skills program. The 2021 group will commence in March. If you are interested in participating in the 8-week program you can contact the office and ask to speak to Aaron on 9890 2673 or by email aong@fan.org.au.

Volunteers

Please see below current Volunteer Vacancies at Family Access Network , if you have any questions or queries regarding these vacancies please contact Oriana on 9890 2673 or ophutully@fan.org.au.

VOLUNTEER MENTORS

The aim of the Volunteer Mentor is to act as a neutral and consistent role model and provide friendship and support (on a one-to-one basis) to a young person between the ages of 15-25 years. Mentors and young people meet on a weekly basis –at a time and place that is mutually agreed -and engage in a range of low-cost activities that build positive adult relationships and community connection.

LEAD TENANT – BOX HILL

We are currently seeking to engage a Lead Tenant aged 23 or over to assist us to support three young people in a shared living house. This is a voluntary live-in position that involves a 12-month commitment in exchange for rent free accommodation. This position is ideally suited to someone (or a couple) who is interested in, or actively studying, in the Human Services Field. This position offers ongoing training and support, and the purpose of the position is to act as a role model for young people to help them to live and share in independent accommodation. This position would suit someone who is prepared to spend most nights at home.

We require you to have good living skills, an understanding of youth issues, and the ability to communicate effectively with young people.

This unique model has been in operation for over 6 years. It provides a high level of support, and young people are required to be engaged in education. You will be required to pass a satisfactory Working with Children Check, Police Check and to sign a tenancy agreement.

Feedback - have your voice heard

At Family Access Network, we strive to provide the best support and services to our clients. A big part of ensuring that FAN is delivering the best possible support is receiving and implementing the feedback received by our clients.

Listening and acknowledging the clients voice allows us to keep our services up to date as well as change aspects of our services if necessary. Feedback loops are critically important. As part of quality governance, continuous improvement and good practice, it is essential that the client voice is not only sought and heard, but that it is genuinely used to influence change and the feedback loop is closed.

With groups such as the Young Mums & the Eastern Diversity groups we've had an overwhelming consensus that participants feel acceptance, respect and the ability to be themselves, the feeling of no judgement and being surrounded by individuals who they can relate and form friendships with.

With other parts of the FAN organisation such as HSS & PRBR clients have expressed how grateful they are for the support, not only financially but emotionally as well. Below are some examples of the feedback FAN has received.

"I'd like to say thank you so much for cheering me up and making my mind at ease when I'm thinking about where I'm gonna live and hope I get the same experience when I move out in a few months"

"They helped me with bond and empowering me to stay connected with people and stay strong with my payment plan"

If you would like to leave any feedback or provide suggestions on how FAN can improve it's services, please contact fan@fan.org.au or call 9890 2673.

Thank you for your support!

AB Countrywide
Alfred Felton Bequest
Austbrokers Countrysde (Staff)
Canterbury Council of Churches
City of Whitehorse
DACHS Group Printers
Deakin Uni
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Premier & Cabinet (Home Affairs)
Eastern Emergency Relief
Goods 360
KevCom
Kogo
Linc
Lion's Club Box Hill
Melbourne Inclusive Church
Orcadia Foundation - Caroline & Derek Young
Pride Foundation
Ringwood Magistrates Court
Rotary Club of Box Hill
Salvocare Eastern
Share the Dignity
St Dominic's Parish, East Camberwell
St Kilda Mum's
Street Smart
Youth Affairs - HEY Grant
Youth Connexions - Whitehorse City

Allan Rogerson
Ange Morgan
Brett Philipp and Band (5 Shades of Grey)
Dr. Cal Andrews
Cara Pitruzzello
Colin Bellis
David Burlew and Band (Max Zero)
Diane Godfrey
Irene Kay
Justin Bonney
Kelly Rafferty
Maddy Reidy
Malcolm Romano of Designsense Web
Margaret Ogilvie
Paul Linossier

Useful Contacts

Housing Assistance

Eastern Region Opening Doors 1800 825 955
Melbourne City Mission Youth Support 9614 3688

Crisis Counselling

Lifeline – 24hrs 13 11 14
Suicide Helpline- 24hrs 1300 651 251
Kids Help Line – 24hrs 1800 551 800
Mens Line 1300 789 978
Parentline 13 22 89

Sexual Assault

Eastern CASA 9895 3281
Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1800 806 292

Health

Family Planning Victoria 9257 0100
Maternal & Child Health line 13 22 29
Nurse On Call – 24hrs 1300 60 60 24

Domestic Violence

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre 1800 015 188
Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) 9259 4200

Child Abuse

Child Protection Crisis Line 13 12 78
Child Abuse Prevention Services 1800 688 009

Legal Aid

Boronia 9762 6235

Legal Help

Eastern Community Legal Centre Ph: 1300 32 52 00 (1300 ECLC 00)

Alcohol & Drugs

Direct Line 24hrs 1800 888 236
Youth Substance Abuse Services – 24hrs 1800 458 685
Eastern Drug & Alcohol Services 1300 650 705

Sexuality & Gender Identity

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard 9663 2939
Transgender Victoria 9517 6613